

COUNTY NEWS



PUBLISHED FOR EMPLOYEES OF THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

December 2001

'Re Fi' Fever Keeps Second Shift on the Clock

If someone were to make a list of County services and staff impacted by the events of Sept. 11, first thoughts would probably go to public safety and public health personnel. But how many of us would think to include the second shift team at the Assessor/Recorder/County Clerk's office?

With the terrorist attacks came an even sharper downturn in the nation's already slumping economy. With the downturn came more interest rate drops. With the interest rate drops came a larger number of people refinancing home mortgages—and those real estate documents all must be recorded with the County. That's meant a lot of long hours for the group charged with making sure those documents are available to the public and the title companies by the next morning.

"Before, we would record 2,000 to 3,000 documents a day," said Assessor/Recorder/Clerk Greg Smith. "Now we're doing 4,000 to 5,000 documents a day."

But it's not the number of documents that impacts the second shift's workload, it's the number of total pages, because each page of each document recorded must be imaged. While the number of documents

recorded by the close of October increased 37 percent from the same time period the year before, the number of pages processed skyrocketed by 81 percent.



Al Maliwat (above) winds a duplicate reel of microfilm of recorded documents, while Sherlyn Luat (right) barcodes each page before it heads through the scanning process.

As a document comes through the office, each page is stamped and barcoded. Information is compiled for the Grantor/Grantee Index, which is available on the County's Web site. Then each page must be checked for reproduction quality, staples removed, and fed through a high-speed scanning machine. Each document is inspected to make sure all the pages have been captured.

"Our job is not complete until they finish imaging the documents and send them out to the title companies, along with being posted on our Web site the next day," said Smith. "They are the unsung heroes of this department. When everyone is going home at 5 p.m., their workday is just starting."

Smith said his office is looking for ways other than overtime to cope with the workload increase, including buying new equipment and looking for ways to improve the workflow. But for now, in light of the sharp increase in pages coming through the office, the team has worked well beyond their usual 3 to 11:30 p.m. schedule, all in the name of making sure County customers have access to what they need.



County Continues to Save Energy Through Conservation Efforts

Through a combination of conservation, energy-efficient technology and smart planning, County employees' quick response to the energy shortage helped the County weather a difficult crisis and keep the lights on all summer long, according to General Services.

The County reduced its electricity usage by 16.3 percent between February and September, compared to the same period the previous year.

But even with that success, General Services cautions that the energy shortage isn't over. As winter approaches, the days become shorter and temperatures drop. Heating and lighting will impose an additional strain on power supplies. Reduced conservation and/or the loss of a critical power plant could change the outlook dramatically and set the stage for blackouts again.

To prepare for these challenges, the County is beginning a new phase of its energy conservation initiative. County buildings continue to "squeeze the day" by having building systems start one hour later and go off one hour earlier. And building temperatures will be maintained at 68 degrees. The bottom line: it may be a little cooler than employees are used to, so keep those sweaters and socks handy!

NewsBriefs

Pausing for Poetry

The Solana Beach branch of the County Library set out to prove that even in the midst of a beach culture, with the right environment and a bit of encouragement, just about anyone can find the inspiration to create their own poetry and find enjoyment in the verses of others. The library launched its newest interest group last month—a poetry club. The club is open to everyone and meets the first Tuesday of each month from 6:30 to 7:45 p.m. at the Solana Beach library branch, 157 Stevens Ave., Solana Beach. For more information, call (858) 755-1404.

Roundtable Returns

Which way will San Diego's economy turn? While no one can predict the future, experts will come together once again to talk about the likely direction at the annual San Diego Economic Roundtable on Jan. 11. The roundtable is organized by the County's Office of Trade and Business Development and hosted by the Board of Supervisors and the San Diego Workforce Partnership. The conference will be broadcast on CTN live, with rebroadcasts in the weeks following.

Ice Capades

Be it a triple lutz or a hockey puck, if you like ice sports DIBBS has something for you. DIBBS is offering County employees discounts for the Jan. 18 Stars on Ice show and a variety of San Diego Gulls hockey games. For more information, see the DIBBS flier located on a bulletin board near you or call (619) 578-5781.



In *Walt's* Words...

Our Traditions Make Us Who We Are

One of the great things about the holiday season is the family traditions that come along with it. Whether we celebrate Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, or Ramadan, all of us have activities and customs that we follow year after year.

These traditions are part of what bind us together as families and communities, in good times and bad, giving us both something to look forward to and look back on with joy and reverence.

My family is no different. A couple of the Ekard family traditions that have stuck with us for the past 25 years: Every Thanksgiving evening following turkey dinner at my parents' house, we watch that great holiday classic, "Miracle on 34th Street." And each year on Christmas morning, we gather first thing, before we open presents, and I read the Christmas story from the Bible in Luke, Chapter Two.

This year, County News staff helped gather some of your holiday traditions, a few of which I would like to share with you. Theresa Ollivierre of Public Works, who grew up on the Caribbean island of Trinidad, has a party each year with her friends and relatives, when they make "pastelles," a meat-filled pastry similar to a tamale. Amid much singing, dancing and eating, the work gets done quickly.

Rebecca Ferrini, who works at Edgemoor Hospital, writes "love letters" to each member of her immediate family, and plans to pass the tradition on to her children. Patricia Coughlin of Human Resources decorates her living room by "wrapping" two large paintings in shiny foil, ribbons and bows. Thomas Middleton of Public Works and his family turn off all electric appliances, from lights to TV sets, and sing Christmas carols together by candlelight. He says it makes the family feel closer, as they imagine their ancestors' holiday celebrations from years past.

Speaking for my family, I know we'll cherish our traditions even more this year as we recall the tragic events this past fall. It is through these traditions, and our hopes and dreams, that we can reclaim the optimism that has defined our nation for so long, and envision a brighter future for our children. I hope all of you have a wonderful holiday season, and treasure the time you spend with those you love.

Walt Ekard
Chief Administrative Officer

Employee Innovations Earn Top Awards for Two DIBBS Suggesters

Joseph Moore of Public Works and Robert Winslow of Planning & Land Use were recognized as Suggesters of the Year for innovations that earned them awards through the County's Do It Better By Suggestion (DIBBS) program.

Moore was credited as having the highest tangible savings for the past fiscal year. Instead of adding a new signal to solve a traffic problem affecting residents at a mobile home park off Jamacha Boulevard, Moore came up with the idea to install electro magnetic loops in the exit lanes and link them to a nearby signal.

The solution helped the park residents as they entered

Jamacha Boulevard, without creating an additional stop for other motorists.

Winslow's suggestion was deemed the highest productivity savings for the past fiscal year. He suggested implementing a centralized mapping application so that departments and the public could access various Geographic Information System (known as GIS) "smart maps" through the Intranet or Internet. There was no centralized place to acquire these maps before, leading to extra search time by staff, frustrations and decreased productivity.

CECO/UnitedWay Campaign Wraps Up; County Workers Rise to Occasion

In light of recent events, this year's annual campaign for the County Employees Charitable Organization (CECO) and United Way has faced new challenges, but also new opportunities.

While the country showed an overwhelming outpouring of support for the victims' families following Sept. 11, the downside has been a corresponding dip in charitable support for local nonprofits. With that in mind, campaign organizers have stressed that although not everyone can contribute, the donations that are made will mean more now than ever.

"Our local charities are vital parts of our safety net to protect vulnerable families and children," said the campaign's chairperson, Dr. Rodger Lum. As the director of the Health and Human Services Agency, Dr. Lum knows first-hand the value of that



"Our local charities are vital parts of our safety net to protect vulnerable families and children."

safety net. "The economic downturn is affecting all of us. The poor and the working poor will be disproportionately affected as they have even less means to meet basic needs."

Results are still trickling in, but so far it looks as if County employees are rising to the occasion.

"One key measure of our ability to sacrifice for the greater good of the community is through our volunteerism and charitable contributions," said Dr. Lum. "Even the most modest contribution goes a long ways toward expressing our County spirit of giving."

To find out more about the County's CECO/United Way campaign, contact your department's campaign coordinator or go to the "County News Extra" section of the online version of *County News*. (Go to cw/mpr on the Intranet or co.san-diego.ca.us/dmpr under "News Center" on the Internet.)

Ver•ba•tim

Letters from satisfied customers served by County employees. (Check out more Verbatim submissions in "County News Extra" online.)

Lynn Gordon (Agriculture, Weights & Measures) thrilled a consumer who didn't expect such great customer service in response to a complaint about an inaccurate scanner.

"Her guts, brains and attitude will bring her success in any profession. She surely is a credit to public service and [her] department."

Patricia Marquez (HHSA, Family Resource Center) was praised for her patience and bilingual skills in assisting an elderly client.

"I'd like to let you know how helpful, courteous and kind Patty was... In many years I have been helped by others, but never before did I truly feel like someone did it with so much enthusiasm."

Michael Garcia (Public Defender) was commended by a former client for being extremely dedicated to the needs and causes of those that depend on him.

"Mr. Garcia is an outstanding human being and an extremely fine lawyer who only increases and expands the image of the Public Defender's office in a most positive and commendable way."

David Hulse (Planning & Land Use) was thanked for his assistance on a recent project.

"Your steady levelheaded direction to planning staff was a clear benefit to us all during this difficult and sometimes contentious process."

Housing & Community Development earned these words of appreciation from a client who's received rental assistance for the past eight years.

"I am a disable senior on a very low income and I don't know how I could have possibly kept a roof over my head without you."

Child Support Services was thanked for helping lessen the financial burden of a single parent.

"We appreciate every effort you and your staff have made in tracking down the absentee parent, enforcing current court judgements and collecting both child support funds and arrears."

James Buckley (Medical Examiner) was praised by a mother for the way he handled the investigation into the death of her adult daughter.

"His questions were respectfully presented and he listened with patience, giving me plenty of time to extricate facts from confusion. The County of San Diego can be proud of a selection and training process that can send an individual the caliber of [Buckley] into people's lives at a time of crisis."

Bob Mattke (Planning & Land Use) impressed a couple who needed to get a grad-ing plan approved.

"He always kept his cool and his focus and was professional in every situation. You have a good man in Bob and I am sure he will do well in your organization."

Edis Boone (HHSA, Family Resource Center) was thanked for her prompt assistance and pointing a client in the right direction.

"Her attitude was exceedingly polite and kind. It gave me great comfort and satisfaction knowing she was on top of [the] situation."

Dr. Jesus Alfonso Guajardo (Agriculture, Weights & Measures) was commended by a veterinarian for his dedication to his profession and to the citizens of San Diego County.

"Dr. Guajardo has always been very accessible when we have needed help with our patients and has on numerous occasions gone beyond the call of duty to aid us."

Danae Ramirez (District 3) helped a woman through a situation involving her son and received high praise for her swift action.

"You are indeed lucky to have such a compassionate, capable, efficient member on your staff."

Ernest Ontiveros (HHSA, Eligibility Technician) was praised by an Aging & Independence Services worker for helping place an elderly man in a skilled nursing facility.

"He kept myself, hospital staff and family informed of what was going on with the application at all times. Ernest was very kind, courteous, and patient."

NewsMakersNewsMakers

Mikel Haas was named director of Animal Control. Haas, who was the County's Registrar of Voters for six years, has been with Animal Control as acting director since July. In accepting the job, Haas said he's looking forward to working with the highly dedicated staff at Animal Control. He also stressed the importance of working with interested community groups to improve the lives of animals in San Diego County.

Sally McPherson was named Registrar of Voters. McPherson has worked for the County for 28 years, most recently as assistant Registrar of Voters. For most of the past year, she has served as acting registrar while Haas handled temporary assignments in Housing and Community Development and Animal Control. She began her County career as an eligibility worker with the Department of Social Services, and has also served as the County's transborder project coordinator and a staff officer for the Chief Administrative Officer.

Mike Dorsey, Chief of Environmental Health's Hazardous Materials Division, was elected vice-chairman of

the California Certified Unified Program Agency (CUPA) Forum Board for 2001-02. The Unified Program is the consolidation of six state environmental programs into one program under the authority of a CUPA. The forum board was formed to provide a single statewide organization consolidating Unified Program implementation efforts and representing all unified program agencies with a single voice.

Al Medina, Alcohol and Drug Program Administrator for the Health and Human Services Agency, was appointed chairperson of a statewide policy group selected by the State Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs. Among its tasks is developing a statewide strategic plan.

Steve Hon, with the Health and Human Services Agency, was elected vice president of the County Health Executives Association of California (CHEAC). CHEAC focuses on issues having significant program and fiscal impact on health services statewide. The organization is a leader in developing policies and strategies to address health issues that affect residents throughout the state.

Home-Grown Idea Takes Root for Environmental Health

Back in 1999, the folks in Environmental Health came up with an idea to help "grow" the Environmental Health Specialists of the future, and promote the County's vision of diversity. The plan was to provide five high school seniors who were unsure of their college plans, but had "B" or better grades, with the opportunity to gain work experience through an eight-week internship. With three rounds of summer internships under its belt, and multiple statewide awards on the shelf, the department has proved it's on to something good.

Sara Martinez was one of the original interns of 1999. The program had such an impact on her that she told *County News*: "This opportunity has motivated me to go to college and become an environmental health specialist."

It wasn't just talk —Martinez is currently majoring in environmental science at a community college and plans on transferring to a four-year university to complete her degree. Looking back, she says the internship made her realize that an education is valuable and can help her succeed in the workplace.

"I also got the opportunity to work with wonderful, caring and supportive people at Environmental Health," Martinez said. And more than two years later, she's still working there, now as a student worker.

Orara Smith-Jenkins also is a student worker with DEH who got her start as an intern in 1999. She's currently attending San Diego State University, majoring in both microbiology and French. Smith-Jenkins said the internship gave her a sense of direction and leadership. She looks to her co-workers as mentors.

"They taught me to take charge of my life," Smith-Jenkins said. "My mentors have also taught me the values of hard work, and striving to get what I want in life."

Last summer's program grew to 11 interns. The students "shadowed" department staffers as they performed their duties, such as inspecting restaurants, as well as helping around the office. Each student who participated was assigned a mentor from DEH who will follow up with the students during the school year.

This innovative program earned the County of San Diego the 2001 Excellence in Environmental Health Award, given by the California Conference of Directors of Environmental Health.



An innovative internship program got student workers Orara Smith-Jenkins and Sara Martinez interested in Environmental Health during the summer of 1999.

County News is published for the 17,000 employees of the County of San Diego.

Board of Supervisors

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Pam Slater, District 3
Ron Roberts, District 4
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County News is available on the County's Intranet at cww/mpr

This information is available upon request in alternative formats for persons with disabilities.



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Walter F. Ekard

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COUNTY NEWS *Extra*

Service Awards

Congratulations to County employees reaching the following milestones in December:

35 years

Nancy L. Simonson (Human Resources)

30 years

Michael R. Angus (Probation)
John R. Caballero (Public Works)
Dennis H. Cutler (HHSA)
Stephen C. Gallagher (Public Works)
James R. Kastorff (General Services)
Horace A. Ketcham III (Environmental Health)
Patrick R. Mc Kinney (Assessor)
William A. Wiltse (Public Works)

25 years

Susan L. Battisti (HHSA)
Sandra Shields (Superior Court)
James R. Wilkins (HHSA)

20 years

Bruce E. Abel (HHSA)
Juliana R. Anders (HHSA)
Donald K. Baker (Sheriff)
Herbert D. Brown (Sheriff)
Janetsa A. Burns (District Attorney)
Liza F. Cabigas (HHSA)
Barbara A. Cammall (Environmental Health)
Roy A. Celis (HHSA)
Robert Doty (Planning & Land Use)

Dennis G. Edgecomb (Sheriff)
Carol R. Fishell-Marotta (Child Support Services)
Sandra J. McAllister (Superior Court)
Barbara J. Mulvey (Planning & Land Use)
Nellie D. Munoz (Registrar of Voters)
Karen G. Ochoa (Assessor)
Monica T. Perez (HHSA)
Chau Le Phung (HHSA)
Sharon Reed (Planning & Land Use)
Cynthia L. Shubert (HHSA)
Dolores A. Swanegan (HHSA)
Karen Taylor (Treasurer/Tax Collector)
Shirley J. Young (Sheriff)

In Memoriam

The San Diego County Employees Retirement Association reports that the following retired employees recently passed away:

Robert V. Bucklin (Coroner)	9/19	Gloria Martinez (Health Services)	10/18
James W. Colquhoun (Public Works)	10/7	Charlotte B. Miller (Information Services)	10/14
Robert M. Cullmer (Assessor)	10/17	Marvin L. Oliver (District Attorney)	9/10
Dolly L. Dawson (District Attorney)	10/9	Jack R. Thomas (Public Works)	10/20
Elsie B. Foster (Probation)	10/15	Betty L. Thuesen (Probation)	10/22
Lois I. Hall (Welfare)	10/2	Warren Wallace (Health Services)	10/22
William T. Hickman (Probation)	10/15	Theodore Wapnowski (Probation)	10/2
Emma J. Kemp (Edgemoor Hospital)	10/3	Patricia M. Waters (Social Services)	9/23
Helen I. Law (Registrar of Voters)	10/12	Merl I. Whorlow (Public Health)	10/24
John Q. Lira (General Services)	10/18		

Our thoughts and prayers also go out to the friends and family of Betty J. Scott of Superior Court (7/29) and Sharyn R. Wootten of Probation (10/6).

County News Extra includes expanded information about and for County employees. If you have something you'd like considered for either *County News* or *County News Extra*, please contact the newsletter editor at (619) 595-4632 or e-mail at rcarmich@co.san-diego.ca.us. Items can also be faxed to (619) 595-4664 or mailed to MS A-359, Attn: *County News*.

Retirements

The San Diego County Employees Retirement Association reports the following employees recently retired:

Thelma A. Balolong
William C. Baty
Timothy Paul Brown
Susan R. Buffington
Jane Clifton
Patrick M. Connolly
Anita Felix
Gloria B. Freiburger

Barbara J. Gaines
Henry Gasang
Mark J. Hayden
Paul Lozano
Lori Martilla-Alejandre
Bruce R. Nason
Irene Owens
Jennifer M. Pedersen

Mary Ann Sardina
Diana Scheffler
Jacquelyn I. Stone
Vinh Tran
Dennis M. Wasdyke
Nora M. Welch
Patricia Whitworth
Mary Williford

Celebrate the Season of Giving

The San Diego County Latino Association is having a Holiday Dinner/Dance on Saturday, Dec. 8, 6:30 to 11:30 p.m. at the Chula Vista Golf Course, 4475 Bonita Road, Bonita. Tickets are \$25 per person. Please bring an unwrapped toy for the children at Washington Elementary School

and receive a free raffle ticket.

The Washington Elementary School toy drive is an annual event of the organization; toys will be distributed at a special school assembly on December 19.

Come celebrate with some great food and music. If you are interested in golfing be-

fore the party, a group discount rate will be offered at \$25.50 for 18-holes starting at 1 pm. For more information, please contact Sylvia Bugiel at (858) 694-3366, Isabel Gomez at (619) 531-5129, or Ken Stevens at (619) 531-5393. Please RSVP if you are planning to participate in the golf game.

Ver•ba•tim *extra*

Mike Schuster (HHSA, Veterans Services) was called a credit to his organization for the way he assists clients.

"It is comforting to know that veterans and their families can depend on Mike to assist them with the many intricate questions and procedures that he handles so expertly."

Kelly Gaffrey and Bob Nagle (Planning & Land Use) were complimented for their cooperation in solving a permit problem.

"The permit problem could have cost me the opportunity to sell the property. Please thank them for their help."

John Edwards (HHSA, Public Administrator) was recognized for guiding a couple through the maze of people, places and paperwork following the deaths of two family members.

"Your job must be very stressful at times, but you are a rare combination of professionalism and compassion."

Angie Luna and Andrea Carreira (Assessor/Recorder/Clerk) were recognized for helping a newly married couple get the paperwork they needed before the husband, who is in the military, was deployed overseas.

"Through their diligent efforts and dedication, [they] personally ensured that my son-in-law can focus on the upcoming mission knowing his family was taken care of."

The **Spring Valley branch library staff** were praised for always for making a difference by giving people personal attention.

"The library may be small, but the friendly assistance makes it a place one would like to visit."

Marilee Savey (HHSA, Public Administrator) heard these words of gratitude from a mother for "going to the extremes" to find her family after her son died.

"You have renewed my faith in the goodness of people."

Nikos Gurfield (Agriculture, Weights & Measures) was thanked for helping determine the cause of death of a family's puppy.

"We appreciate you and your job. Now we are at peace with the closure and death of our family pet."

Karen Buller (Planning & Land Use) was thanked for her efforts in a boundary adjustment between two parcels of land.

"Your entire attitude and demeanor toward all parties was very positive and professional."

Linda Goff (Agriculture, Weights & Measures) was credited for her helpfulness to another County department.

"Please recognize Linda for her excellent 'internal customer service' efforts. She has always been very helpful in providing the loan of a supply item, office tool or equipment or whatever is needed to get the job done."

If you missed your department's CECO/United Way Campaign, you can still sign up to help your community through either or both of these organizations. Just print out this page, fill out the information, and mail it to *County News* at MS A-359. We'll make sure it gets to the right place so you can start giving through this simple payroll deduction program.

CECO and United Way Community Fund

Last Name First Name Social Security # Dept. No.

YES! I want to help provide vital health and human care services in my community. I hereby authorize continuous deduction through the County payroll giving plan.

Minimum payroll deduction is \$2.00 per pay period.

Shared equally by CECO and
United Way/CHAD per pay period of:

\$ _____ \$20 \$10 \$8 \$5 \$2
(write in or circle amount)

CECO

OR

UNITED WAY/CHAD

I pledge a gift per pay period of:

\$ _____ \$20 \$10 \$8 \$5 \$2
(write in or circle amount)

I pledge a gift per pay period of:

\$ _____ \$20 \$10 \$8 \$5 \$2
(write in or circle amount)



San Diego County Employees'
Charitable Organization
1600 Pacific Highway, Room 209
San Diego, CA 92101
619.531.5880

Thank You!

Designation forms are available upon request



United Way / CHAD

4899 Murphy Canyon Road
San Diego, CA 92123
858.492.2000
www.unitedway-sd.org
www.combinedhealth.org

Signature

Date



CECO and United Way Community Fund

Gift Designation



United Way / CHAD
Campaign

Please Print

Designated Amount: \$ _____

Your Name

My designated gift is to go to: (must include address)

Social Security Number

Work Phone Number

Organization Name

Department

Mail Station

Street Address

Signature

Date

City

State

Zip

Designations may be made but are not required. To designate your gift, complete both this form and your payroll deduction card. Designations are for one year only. Separate forms should be used for each agency designated.